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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 003436

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/27/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EU](#) [RS](#)  
SUBJECT: GOR ON EU-RUSSIA SUMMIT

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Alice G. Wells for reasons  
1.4 (b) and (d).

#### Summary

1. (C) The MFA told us that Russia accomplished its objectives at the November 14 EU-Russia Summit in Nice: the normalization of EU-Russia relations after the events of Georgia, and a public endorsement of Medvedev's proposed Euroatlantic security proposal. Russia and the EU will resume negotiations on a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement December 2 and EC Commissioners are considering a trip to Moscow at the end of January. The MFA believes it has support for a summit on Medvedev's European Security Treaty initiative, which could take place with OSCE members in June or July 2009. Although French President Sarkozy raised the presence of Russian and South Ossetian forces in Perevi and Akhagori, Russia is now using the results of the summit to support its preferred narrative, the "no business as usual" policy of some in the EU is at an end. End summary.

#### Limited Time, Big Objectives

2. (C) The MFA's Head of Unit for EU affairs, Petr Plikhin, told us that Russia achieved its two main objectives at the November 14 EU-Russia Summit in Nice: the normalization of EU-Russia relations after the events of Georgia, and a public endorsement of Medvedev's proposed Euro-Atlantic security proposal. He also noted that the one and a half hour session was dominated by the economic crisis and the upcoming G20 meeting in Washington, with Georgia briefly discussed.

#### Normalizing Relations: PCA Negotiations Restart

3. (C) At the summit, the EU informed Russia of the November 10 European Council decision to resume Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) negotiations. Plikhin went so far as to say that "despite comments, EU-Russia cooperation was not frozen." Under the existing PCA framework there were at least 30 working-level meetings held during the fall and 3 ministerial meetings held in October. He reasoned that the EU's decision to repeatedly freeze and unfreeze negotiations is not an issue for Russia, as Russia is interested in a new agreement "but is not more interested than the EU should be." EC diplomats told us that PCA negotiations would resume on December 2, and the Head of the EC mission Marc Franco told the press that EC President Jose Manuel Barroso had accepted an invitation from Putin for European Commissioners to visit Moscow in the second half of January.

#### European Security Treaty (EST)

4. (C) The EST is "a concept gaining ground with room for more discussions at a special OSCE Summit in June or July 2009," Plikhin told us. He could add no new details on the proposal, but stated that even if the summit does not take

place under the OSCE, it should be "on the basis" of the organization and not exclude any potentially contributing country or organization. He said that Lavrov will also press to have language calling for a summit included in the upcoming OSCE ministerial in Helsinki.

Georgia

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15. (C) Discussion on Georgia at the Summit, was limited to a "technical exchange" based on new press information regarding the lead-up to the confrontation, with details left to the negotiators in Geneva. Although Plikhin said that Sarkozy raised the presence of troops in Akhagori and Perevi, he provided no details on the exchange except to describe the situation as "ridiculous -- the border runs down the street in Perevi."

Comment

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16. (C) Glossing over the large divisions within the EU, Russia has touted this summit as an end to the EU's "no business as usual policy." The largest surprise of the summit was Sarkozy's public endorsement of the EST concept, although the GOR privately grumbled that the French President tied it to a commitment that Russia not deploy Iskander missiles to Kaliningrad. Russia will now take this qualified support and use it to press other, more reluctant European members to join in a discussion on security. While the atmospherics were reportedly warm, the format of the summit was shorter, and did not include a dinner the evening before

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the meetings -- Medvedev dined instead with Prince Albert of Monaco.  
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